

CONFIDENTIAL

72-5538//

13 November 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

THROUGH : Chief, ISD

THROUGH : SAIC

SUBJECT : Request for CIA Concurrence in Unclassified publication of an official history of the US Army in Indochina, 1942-1945

1. In the attached letter, dated 20 October 1972, Brigadier General James L. Collins, Jr., Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, requests an informal security review on a monograph entitled "The United States Army in Indochina 1942-1945," by Dr. Ronald Spector, a member of the general's staff. It is assumed from the general's letter that he is referring to unclassified publication of the monograph, the classification of which now ranges from open source to SECRET.

2. At my request, [REDACTED], who is working on a review of R. Harris Smith's OSS, which contains several chapters on the Far East, for Studies in Intelligence, has reviewed Dr. Spector's manuscript. [REDACTED] evaluation, which is attached, rates the references to OSS as relatively minor and as not sensitive. [REDACTED] has listed the page references to OSS and the names of OSS personnel mentioned, and has asterisked those also named in Smith's book.

3. I concur in this evaluation. The subject of the study is not OSS but the US Army in Indochina. The major concern of the author appears to be tracing the formulation of US policy towards continued French control of Indochina, and not OSS operations there. The operations referred to were undertaken in support of wartime actions; the units, operations, and US personnel have long since been withdrawn or terminated.

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CL BY SIGNER

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4. In contrast to other requests for the declassification of OSS records, this case does not involve a blanket request for access to groups of records. All of the OSS documents cited in the study have already been made available to the author. Most of the book, in fact, is based on documents already published by State in Foreign Relations, in published memoirs and histories, and to some extent on the official archives of the Army.

5. Subject to concurrence of Chief, ISD/DDP, as custodian of the OSS records, it is recommended that CIA not object to unclassified publication, although the study is less than distinguished in quality. To avert a deluge of inquiries about OSS sources, it is suggested that we request deletion of citations to specific documents. It is hoped that before publication the Army Historical Office will give the manuscript a rigorous proofing; it is now marred by numerous misspellings and some mangling of French words.

6. A draft reply to General Collins for your signature is attached.

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Bernard Drell
Chief, CIA Historical Staff

Attachments

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